

one for an average ryot or an average cultivator; and the aim and policy of Government in fixing the maximum was that vast extent of lands should not be allowed to be cornered by capitalist classes but that they should be made, as far as possible, available to the ordinary average man and that is why the maximum limit was fixed. Ordinarily, it may be 30, 40 or 45 acres that may be registered but nobody shall get more than 60 acres. That is the rule that Government have laid down and it is done merely with a view to see that there is a very equitable division of the land among as large a proportion of the population as possible.

The time for the Demand is over. The question before the House is that a sum of Rs. 9,13,550 be granted under Demand II—Land Revenue and Taxes on Income.

The motion was put and carried. The Grant was made.

DEMAND III—STAMPS.

Mr. A. Lakshminarayana Ayyar : Sir, I beg to move for a grant of Rs. 78,371 under Demand III—Stamps.

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar : Sir, I support the demand. In doing so I beg to bring to the kind notice of Government a suggestion with regard to the selling of stamps. Now stamp papers and stamps are being sold through a set of people called stamp vendors and through the treasuries. In the village parts these vendors are not easily available, as it is not considered to be a paying proposition to people to invest large sums upon vendorship. Now that we have got a good number of Anchal Offices in almost all the pakhathies in the State and many of them do the Savings Bank business, I ask Government why Anchal Masters should not be entrusted with the sale of these stamps also.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : Both revenue and court fee stamps?

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar : Yes. A man staying in the Quilon town may not find any difficulty in getting stamps; but another man staying, say, in Udumpanchola, may not have the same facility to get stamps. Some Anchal Masters have deposited Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000 or even more as securities. That depends upon the nature of the business transacted in each Anchal Office. I ask, in such of the offices where the Savings Bank system is introduced, what is the harm in entrusting the Anchal Masters with some stamps that may be required for the villagers. If the Government find that Anchal stamps to the value of a good sum can be entrusted to these Anchal Masters and they can be trusted to handle more than Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 6,000 a day in the Savings Bank business

[Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar.]

where is the harm in entrusting them with the revenue and court fee stamps to the value of a few hundred rupees more? These Anchal Masters have furnished securities, and it seems to me that they can be asked to sell revenue stamps and court fee stamps also in the same manner as they conduct the sale of Anchal stamps.

Mr. T. Krishna Pillai: Are the Anchal Masters to work for the same pay?

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: I have no objection if the Government allows a certain commission to them.

Mr. V. Sankara Menon: For general utility, is it not necessary that the stamps should be sold near the offices where they are required?

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: There is no dearth of these vendors where there are Civil Courts. I say the difficulty is experienced only in the village parts. For an one anna stamp a man at Pulinkunnu has to run up to Alleppey and purchase the stamp spending 6 annas. If my proposition is accepted and an Anchal Master is entrusted with the sale of these revenue and court fee stamps, these difficulties may be avoided.

In fact, in the existing circumstances Government are losing. A man who wants to execute a document, for which according to rules a ten-rupee stamp paper is needed, manages with a blank paper without any stamp at all. All the conditions that are required for a debt bond are being written on that blank paper. He thinks he will have to pay the stamp duty only when the necessity of filing it in a civil court, arises. That is all. Of course, at the time he enters into a transaction he does not anticipate that he will have to go to a court of law and put to the necessity of paying the penalty.

Mr. T. Krishna Pillai: Is not the penalty imposed so as to be a deterrent to this practice?

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: Yes. It is only in places where there is no facility for the purchase of stamps that this practice is resorted to.

There is another way in which Government are losing in not making arrangements for the sale of these stamps in places where they are required. Instead of a 5 rupee stamp paper on which a document has to be executed, the executant, gets ten half-rupee stamp papers, pin them together and writes the body of the documents in all the ten papers. This is really a loss to Government. Therefore, in order that Government may not lose, in order that the revenue under Stamps may increase, I am suggesting that local Anchal Masters should be entrusted with the sale of revenue and court fee stamps also. If necessary, they may be asked to furnish

sufficient security, or if the security they have already furnished for carrying on the Savings Bank business is deemed to be sufficient, they may be entrusted with this work without additional security.

Mr. N. Krishna Aiyar: I support the motion, with an observation, however, that I am not sanguine about the Government realising the Rs. 21 lakhs budgetted for under this head. Evidently the estimate for the next year has been based on the revised estimate for the current year. One is encouraged by the fact that they have realised more than Rs. 2 lakhs of rupees over the original estimate. But the reasons are obvious, more particularly for the increase in the revenue under Court fee Stamps. I believe the larger revenue realised in the current year under 'Judicial' should have been due to the large number of debt relief applications that have been filed during the current year. But the number of such applications may dwindle to nil during the next year so that the large volume of court fees under that head will not be realised and cannot be anticipated for the next year.

There is also another matter. The reduction in the number of monetary transactions may also adversely affect the revenue under 'General Stamps.' There is a considerable reduction in the number of appeals and original suits filed before the civil courts. It is likely that the number will be reduced still further next year and possibly still further during the subsequent years. Therefore my fear is that under the head 'General Stamps and Judicial Stamps' there is bound to be a considerable reduction in the realisation of the revenues. As a measure of retrenchment and economy I would suggest that the size of the half-rupee court fee stamp may be reduced to half of its present size.

I believe the largest number of revenue stamps sold is the half rupee court fee stamp. If the size of this stamp is reduced a considerable saving can be effected under that Head.

Mr. A. Lakshminarayana Ayyar. Sir, the question of sale of general stamps in Anchal Offices requires careful consideration in consultation with the Anchal Superintendent. There will also be some difficulty in the matter of accounting as the value of the stamps cannot be credited to the Anchal Department, being a commercial Department. The question will be considered by Government and the matter settled.

As regards the receipts referred to by Mr. Krishna Aiyar, we have already anticipated a reduction of about Rs. 1 lakh under Stamps.

The question that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 78,371 under Demand III—Stamps, was put to vote and carried.

The motion was passed and the grant made.